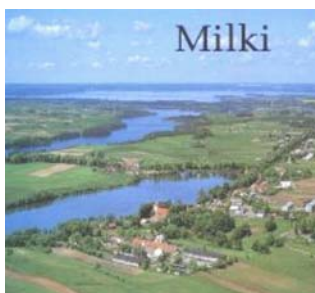


# LOCLAB Bialystok

## *The targets of the meeting*

- > *get in contact to each other*
  - > *country-specific statements*
- > *proceedings for case-studies*
- > *proceedings for secondary analysis*
- > *theoretical contexts*



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## **Welcome in Podlasie!**

Hosting the INTAS meeting in Podlasie has a symbolic significance. It is said, that here West meets East – since the Middle ages, influences from both sides overlapped here, and – as historians tell us – settlers both from catholic Mazovia and orthodox Great Lithuanian Princedom and Ukraine lived peacefully side by side. Nowadays Podlasie finds itself in a very special situation. As a part of Poland it played with the avant-garde of democratic changes in Central-Eastern Europe, and now it is the frontier of European Union, still shaped by the diversity and tensions of a multi-cultural region. Having this in mind we see our region as an excellent laboratory to investigate the changes occurring in this part of the world.

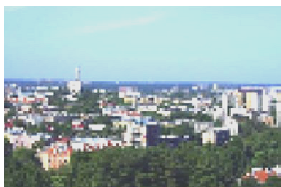
It is a good moment to say some words on our research field relevant for LOCLAB. As we continually conduct research in North-Eastern Poland, we assumed first to conduct a more broadly approach for the analysis of local communities in Podlasie. However in our discussion at the meeting we would like to argue for a more comprehensive case study concentrated on one municipality. It is Milki (see picture), near Gizycko that could play the role as our laboratory. What is interesting in this small community, numbering less than 4000 habitants, is its specific situation. It struggles with one of the highest unemployment rates in our country, but is located in one of the most beautiful regions and is massively visited by tourists. It lays not so far from borders with Russia and Belarus, but in spite of this, the



biggest concern of the inhabitants is their relation with Germans, those who have been living before in the region (former Eastern Prussia). There are strong fears vis-à-vis their probable claims for “coming back”, but probably also strong hopes in connection with the EU. All these issues seem to recommend this municipality as a very interesting case for our study. We hope to contribute to the roads on which this type of community can take advantage of the opportunities as well as to avoid the barriers of local development. The local labour market contains the basic elements and tensions of this microcosm, which is a mirror of the urgent social problems of most societies – in Eastern as well as in Western societies. So our studies will contribute to the heart piece of LOCLAB and we hope to enrich it with comparative materials and results from the other INTAS and NIS teams.

Bialystok, Zurich, August 2005

Malgorzata Bienkowska-Ptasznik  
Ireneusz Sadowski



### Sociology in Bialystok

The Polish INTAS team is anchored at the Institute of Sociology at the University in Bialystok. It exists since 1997 but sociological traditions in our city go back to 1972. The main research field of the Institute is the Eastern borderland of Poland, neighbouring Lithuania and Belarus. Research subjects are ethnic relations, changes in local societies, the emergence of local civil society and social capital. The theoretical basis is rooted in the research on transformation and democratisation of Polish society since 1989. One of the special competence in Bialystok is the "Sociology of Borders". Scholars from this topic will join to our meeting. Some of us participate at the conference: "Citizenship and Identity in borderline areas" Suprasl, 8. – 10. 9. 05

### Suprasl

#### The place of our stay



Dom Wypoczynkowy  
"Knieja"  
Al. Niepodleglosci 6  
16-030 Suprasl  
www.suprasl.com.pl

## Suprasl: How to make a success story

At this first workshop of the project some people of our network will come into new contacts. Indeed one of our tacit but very important goals is to meet and know each other, to exchange information. This will be our „social capital“ for the further work and cooperation.

However as you see our agenda is ambitious; it demands a careful preparation by each team. The 11 questions are a guideline for preparing the workshop.

Evidently our network embraces an impressing diversity of different people, countries and locations – but also of maybe diverging motivations.

What is a success story under these conditions? The best one is to enter into a play of interactions exchanging the country-specific points of view.

A preliminary review shows that there is an amount of publications available under the keyword of „labour markets“ and mainly „correlated with economic development“. We should perceive this stock of data, information and insights.

However, we should also record the deficits: the measurable things are not always the real ones! Let us look in depth and start from the small to the big things, from communities to regions and to nations! Please elaborate and reformulate the questions to get them more precise for your country.

## Fate or paradise? An illustration

In one of our first conferences in Warsaw one of the essential conclusions was: „civil society means taking part in activities, contributing something to the society.“ This basic, but often forgotten definition of civility is central for our project. In peripheral contexts people help themselves by activities, which are missing in statistical reports. There is innovation in the peripheries as well as in centres. Even in privileged places groups try to find alternative activities to the standard carriers.

Most of the regional studies about labour markets are mainstream studies with a conservative bias. We examined the wiiw study: *Regional Employment Patterns and Prospective Developments in the New EU -Member States (Rep 319 – 2005)*. Herein the EU-15 (Western part of EU) is compared to the New Member States (Eastern part of EU). The regions are clustered according to the conventional data on GDP, labour division, employment rate and education. Differences by regions are documented. We read about the gaps between the Western and the Eastern regions, and the increasing

centre-periphery gap in Eastern countries (see margin page 4).

However, for our project the hidden assumptions are crucial: The authors follow Rostow's „evolution-as-a-fate“, a theory stated for the development of the whole world some decades before; the Western regions of the EU-15 are the paradises for the future of the Eastern peripheries. The latter have to learn their fate from the former, how to speed and to reach them. Please forget any innovation! There is no alternative!

Fortunately, people are also working outside of the official statistics, for example in the over employed agricultural sector. Where will they be, how and with which perspectives in the future? We guess that our project focusing on case studies will go much more in detail and focus on men and women behind the statistical and macroregional generalisation.

Our innovation will be the discovery of dark holes, enlightening them and enriching the insights into what does mean civil society in its basic terms.

## The programme of the Bialystok conference – for a preparation see list of questions on page 4

<p><b>11 September 2005</b></p> <p>Arrival of the participants at Bialystok</p> <p>Welcome and Visit to Suprasl (afternoon)</p> <p><b>20.00 – 20.45</b></p> <p>Prof Sadowski: Social capital of border region Podlasie</p> <p><b>21.00 – 21.45</b></p> <p>Introduction: General expectations and tasks of the project</p> <p>Country-specific statements</p> <p>Common discussion</p> <p>Moderator: M. Bienkowska-Ptasznik</p>	<p>Lunch break</p> <p>Guided tour around Suprasl and its historic monuments</p> <p><b>17.00 – 18.30</b></p> <p>Secondary analysis: quantitative and qualitative indicators (see Q8 a/b) for the aspects: the state of the art and the feasibility of empirical studies in the different countries</p> <p>Moderator: R. Poczykowski</p>
<p><b>12 September 2005</b></p> <p><b>9.00 – 10.30</b></p> <p>An overview to the four specific questions (see Q1 – Q4)</p> <p>Country-specific summaries</p> <p>Discussion</p> <p>Moderator: I. Sadowski</p> <p><b>10.30 – 12.00</b></p> <p>Stipulation of the cases (see Q5 – Q7)</p> <p>Propositions for the case-studies: Selection of places, methods, and proceedings</p> <p>Stimulating and ensuring the comparability: exchange and cooperation between the teams</p> <p>Moderator: H.-P. Meier-Dallach</p>	<p><b>13 September 2005</b></p> <p><b>9.00 – 11.00</b></p> <p>Theorising, framework and preliminary inputs from teams (see Q10) and consequences for the empirical studies</p> <p>Moderator: T. Vorozheikina</p> <p><b>11.00 – 12.00</b></p> <p>Science and Practice: what stakeholders can do and expect? (see Q9)</p> <p>Moderator: M. Pachulia</p> <p><b>13.00 – 15.00</b></p> <p>Retrospective and priorities of the project</p> <p>Information and ongoing projects and activities (see Q11)</p> <p>Decision on joint publication (see Newsletter VII)</p> <p>Moderator: N. Genov</p> <p>Formalities, payments and administration</p>

### Some general conclusions from the wiiw study:

**Centre – peripheral gaps**  
Regional disparities in GDP per head have widened markedly in the NMS (New Member States with inclusion of Bulgaria and Romania) in recent years, though not in the EU-15. In capital cities throughout the EU, GDP per head is significantly higher than in other regions.

### Agriculture, over-employment and hidden unemployment

The lowest employment rates are in the basic service regions – i.e. all service activities apart from business and financial ones – in both the NMS and the EU-15. The highest employment rates in Poland and Romania are in the agricultural regions. This reflects the large number unable to find work elsewhere who make a living from subsistence farming. In contrast to the open unemployment in the western regions of Poland, the east and central parts are characterised by massive over-employment in agriculture and hidden unemployment. Over years, however, the employment rate in NMS agricultural regions has fallen more than in other parts.

All of the NMS regional clusters have a larger share of employment in agriculture than their EU-15 counterparts and all, except the capital cities, have a larger share in industry as well. Within industry, there was a shift in employment towards the low-skill sectors.

Source: R. Römisch and T. Ward, 2005, Regional Employment Patterns and Prospective Developments in the New EU Member States. wiiw research reports 319

Internet data links, which can be useful for our questions:

[www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)  
[www.wiiw.ac.at](http://www.wiiw.ac.at)  
[www.wto.org](http://www.wto.org)  
[www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org)  
[www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)  
<http://epp.eurostat.cec.eu.int/pls/portal>

We understand “labour” as a basic societal concept, this implies that:

*The labour market... shapes a local society in a specific way*

*generates interactions between firms and people, different groups, losers and winners, East and West*

*has its impacts on communities*

*evokes specific reactions among people and social change*



*Where is the human and societal point of view?*

*Reviewing the international reports on economic transformations of the global actors like World Bank, IWF, EU one feels that human labour is not more than a strictly economic construct.*

## The eleven questions

The specific questions for each country-team are:

- 1) If you look to the case study chosen by your team, how do you characterise the local society as it is produced by the labour market?
  - 2) If you look to your country, which are the most significant regional variants of local societies and its labour market aspects? Are there types suggesting a typology?
  - 3) How do you summarise the reactions of various groups and people in these local societies and its labour situations?
  - 4) How are these reactions responded by the communities, stakeholders, policy makers and firms?
- ➔ *Please prepare a summary and present it*

**Case studies**

The teams dealing with a case study are asked:

- 5) How could you characterise the local context of your selected case stressing the four specific questions above 1), 3), 4) and 2)?
  - 6) How will you approach the cases empirically in regard to methods, tools and instruments?
  - 7) What kind of cooperation is possible or planned in order to compare the case studies?
- ➔ *Please prepare a summary and present it*

**Secondary analysis**

- 8) How can we use/ produce a set of common indicators for the secondary analysis of the main questions?
    - a) What is the state of the art in each country?
    - b) How can we exchange and work together in order to produce a comparative final product?
- ➔ *Please prepare a summary and present it*

**Network, cooperation and interactions with others**

- 9) Who are the most interesting actors of a case region or a country to be informed or included into the diffusion of results? What has been done so far/ what could we do in order to include such actors?
- ➔ *Please reflect and give a first overview*

**Theorising and framework, first ideas and inputs**

The four questions, the case and secondary analysis imply theoretical assumptions. We should reflect the questions and steps under a theoretical point of view.

- 10) What are your ideas and base lines, which we should use as preliminary inputs? Please reflect on the topic for discussion.
- ➔ *Please present an overview*

**Coming events and agenda**

- 11) Are there occasions or events, which are relevant for our network for the next time?
- ➔ *Please present a short overview*

## Project summary: The dynamics and social impacts of the labour markets on local communities

In the last few years the East-West relations have changed radically. A series of studies reflect these geopolitical and macro-sociological transformations and the impacts on the level of “big things”, for instance the performance of economies, the implementation of standards and the emergence of civil trends in the Eastern hemisphere. The network project will take into account these processes but aims to analyse, understand and discuss from the reality and logics of the “small things”. This perspective becomes obvious if we concentrate on the principal resource of people – to have or not to have a job in the area where people live. Therefore, the network project emphasises the dynamics of labour markets as empirical impacts on people’s chances and barriers to participate in labour. The approach is interdisciplinary involving social conditions of life (sociology), socio-economic transition (socio-economic aspects) and the perception of borders, interethnic rivalries, social participation and identities (socio-cultural factors). The network aims to promote transdisciplinary tasks. The results address scholars as well as policy actors, municipal decision makers and entrepreneurs or investors. The general task is a bottom up contribution to the central issue: how could/should civil society be developed and how does it emerge starting from the local and existential conditions of people?

The logic and process of the master plan is the following:

The network

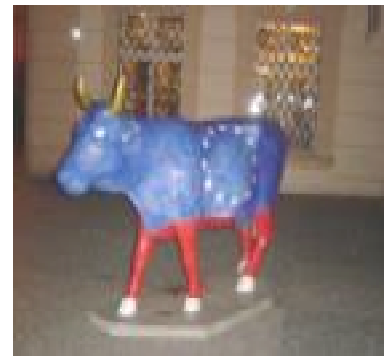
- aims to concentrate on access, participation and exclusion in labour as the essential resource for the individuals and municipalities of a society;
- searches for insights into the question of how the changing relations between East and West do generate social dynamics in the local labour markets of the selected countries of the network;
- analyses the impacts of these dynamics on social polarities between losers and winners, their reactions to inter-ethnic relations, the perception and images of borders and the taking of an active part in local life and civil society.

The network project aims to bring together these insights along three levels:

*Primary data analysis and case studies:* For a network approach with a broad resonance the insights in concrete situations are primary. So in the border regions of Poland, Belarus, the Ukraine and in towns of Russia and Bulgaria case studies are planned: by qualitative and quantitative methods the topics are described, analysed and interpreted. In three case studies the border regions are selected and the teams will cooperate: in Poland the Podlaskie area is compared with Hrodna in Belarus and Zakarpattia in the Western part of the Ukraine. In Russia and in Bulgaria two towns, Stupino and Pernik, are the areas of analysis and comparison.

*Secondary analysis and reviews:* In the countries participating in the network the previous research, available data and observations are re-analysed in order to enlarge, validate and enrich the insights of the case studies according to a common theoretical framework. It connects the changing interaction space between West and East to the dynamics of labour markets and their impacts on community development. Four areas of difference and impacts are discussed and compared on this level of the network and research activities: the Western areas, mainly Switzerland and Germany as countries outsourcing activities and labour to the East, the new EU-countries (Poland) or candidates (Bulgaria), the NIS countries Russia and Ukraine and the Caucasian area (represented by Georgia).

*Networking:* This framework is connected to a master plan, which will bring together the teams, the scholars as well as persons and organisations from the practice. The latter will contribute to the theoretical as well as empirical and practical tasks and enlarge the disciplinary axes by a trans-disciplinary approach. Three collaboration meetings are planned, the first in Białystok (Poland), the second in Russia and the final meeting in Tbilisi. The networking initiates spin off projects involving additional resources of the participating institutions, other funds and organisations.



The societal models, which push and pull the project of an over all Europe:

### **Pacification** by markets:

After the 2nd World War West-Europe seeks to integrate the enemies by economic interaction.

### **Efficiency** by technics:

Europe is invented by the elites of the new technological style.

**Governance**  
by policy making:  
Europe strives to become the hegemonic centre in Europe.

**Transformism**  
by high speed:  
The EU’s mission is to generate the European wide area of high speed economy.

*Or does diversity come back to Europe?*

**Diversity**  
by learning:  
of contextual variety.

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[www.culturprospectiv.ch/  
php/index.php?Aktuell](http://www.culturprospectiv.ch/php/index.php?Aktuell)

## **The network: institutions, team leaders, participants**

**Switzerland:** WORLD\_DRIVES,  
International Centre of Competence for  
Practice and Social Research / cultur  
prospectiv, Mühlebachstrasse 35, CH-8008  
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MA N. Veremeeva; MA A. Markovich

**Russia:** Analytical Centre Levada, Public  
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Dr A. Georgievich Levinson (delegate)  
The Moscow School of Social and Economic  
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Prospect 82/2, 119571 Moscow, Russia,  
Prof T. Evgenievna Vorozheikina (TL)

**Ukraine:** Center for Social and Political  
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0100 Kyiv, Ukraine,  
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Dr N. Pohorila (delegate)

**Georgia:** Georgian Opinion Research  
Business International (GORBI), Public  
Opinion Research, 45 Vaja Pshavela Ave,  
380064 Tbilisi, Georgia,  
Rezo Pachulia (TL)

### ***Previous and ongoing projects***

*The Eastern European network was created  
by a series of conferences and projects since  
the early nineties. Important have been  
network and joint research projects:*

- The role of regions in transforming post-  
communist societies: Belarus, Georgia,  
Russia and Ukraine as cases for comparison  
(INTAS-1997-02025)
- Regions in the Ukraine: dynamics,  
movements and politics (INTAS-94-3938)
- How Georgians view democracy?  
(SCOPES FGEPj65810)
- LOC\_LAB: Dynamics and social impacts  
of the labour markets on local communities  
in Eastern Europe accelerated by the EU-  
Integration (INTAS-04-79-6799)
- The Chernobyl generation. Life situations  
and perspectives in Gomel, Chernigov,  
Brjansk (SDC)

### ***Project initiatives and planned ones***

*The Eastern European network initiated  
further research projects:*

- Transnational companies challenged by  
diverging societal contexts: social  
performance between Western, East-Central  
and NIS areas for Europe
- The role of foreign and local enterprises in  
face of its societal contexts. Azerbaijan,  
Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in case  
studies of the Southern NIS area (SCOPES)
- Rebuilding the past for the future. The  
cultural heritage in people's mind compared  
between Belarus, Russia, Ukraine,  
Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan,  
Bulgaria and Poland (INTAS)
- How many worlds? Joint publication  
project on the occasion of the 25th  
anniversary of the World Society Foundation  
2007 in Zurich (see Newsletter VII "How  
many worlds?")